THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (c) On 1st March, 2002, the Government had reduced the retail selling price of petrol and diesel by around Rs. 1.00 per litre and Rs. 0.50 per litre respectively. Later, the oil companies increased the retail selling price of petrol and diesel by around Rs. 2.50 per litre and Rs. 1.50 per litre respectively from 4th June, 2002 and by around Rs. 0.25 per litre for each product from 16th June, 2002, taking into account the increase in the international oil prices.

Simultaneously, with a view to partially contain the impact of the increase in the average Indian crude oil basket price, from around US $ 19.50 per barrel for the month of February, 2002 to around US $25 per barrel for the month of May, 2002, on the retail price of petrol and diesel, the Government reduced the excise duty rate on these products by 2% each from 4th June, 2002.

Based on estimated June, 2002 sales volume, the aforesaid changes in prices would result in an increase in the revenue of the oil marketing companies by around Rs. 700 crore per month. As regards the reduction in the oil pool account deficit, with the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM), the oil pool account has been wound up effective 1st April, 2002.

Propagation of changes in oil prices

705. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to devise an effective system to communicate the changes in the prices of petrol and diesel so that retail outlets do not fleece customers;

(b) if so, the main features of the proposal; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor keeping in view fortnightly changes in prices of Petrroleum Products under the new free market system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLUEM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (c) The public

sector oil companies have been advised to publicise through media, any changes in the prices of petrol and diesel, for the awareness of the consumers.

Overseas equity of ONGC Videsh

706. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:
SHRIBHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC Videsh have acquired or acquiring oil equity abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether ONGC Videsh have recently lost out to the Chinese competitor for two hot oil properties, both good producing fields in Oman and Indonesia; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL), the wholly owned subsidiary of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) is engaged in hydrocarbon exploration and production (E and P) activities abroad. At present OVL is participating in the following overseas projects:

(i) Block 06.1 offshore gas project in Vietnam, with 45% participating interest.

(ii) Sakhalin-I oil and gas project in Russia, with 20% participating interest.

(iii) Block-A-I Offshore gas project in Myanmar, with 20% participating interest.

(iv) Exploration Block 8 in Iraq with 100% participating interest.

OVL is also pursuing E and P opportunities in some countries like Sudan, Oman, Libya, Kazakhstan, Indonesia and Venezuela.

(c) and (d) The 50% participating interest in Block-5 in Oman which was being negotiated by OVL was subsequently awarded to a Chinese company by the owner of the Block.